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A

DESCRIPTION

OF

BLACKPOOL.

William Hutton

BRITISH MUSEUM
27 APR 83

A

DESCRIPTION

OF

BLACKPOOL,

IN

LANCASHIRE;

FREQUENTED FOR

SEA BATHING.

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BRITISH MUSEUM
27 APR 53

A

DESCRIPTION

OF

BLACKPOOL.

ONE of the fashionable pleasures of the day is, to visit a watering-place; for which we know how to plead necessity. The waters of Buxton are not more efficacious now than they were five hundred years ago, but their use bears no proportion. The reason of this difference is, the increase of industry, of commerce, and of wealth. The more a man is attentive to his concerns, the more he has a right to wish a relaxation. Success is the result of attention, and

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that enables him to gratify his wish. Wherever the people in high life take the lead, the next class eagerly follow. The Prince's frequent visits to Brighthelmstone crowd the place, and teach the inhabitants to despise little folks; the King, by only tasting the spring of Cheltenham, communicates additional virtues. Majesty, like an angel moving the waters, inspires them with fresh influence. Perhaps Cheltenham will carry the palm from Bath, that renowned seat of the dying.

It may be asked, Why I write of Blackpool? Because it has merit, which is little known. Whether it will answer the expence? It will, if my information invites one person there, who shall find a cure. Had the Court seen it I should have had no *occasion* to write.—If the place is possessed of advantages preferable to some others, it is but justice to exhibit them to the world. I have no private view, or friend in the place, to

serve.

ſerve.——When I intended to viſit it, with my family, I neither knew, nor could learn, any particulars reſpecting its appearance, or accommodations; another may be circumſtanced like me; this little work will inform him.

Names of places are derived from various cauſes, which are often difficult to trace; ſuch as ſituation, the name of an owner, an occurrence, a trade, a local circumſtance, a natural production, a ſimple incident, &c. A trifle gives a name, which time ſeldom wears out. A bed of dark water, which is now almoſt dry, gave one to Blackpool. It appears by our old maps, that a pool, more than half a mile over, and half one from the ſea, lay at the ſouth end of the place, which, ſince the improvement of land, has been reduced, and converted into good meadow

ground; its veſtiges are viſible. The diſcharge into the ſea yet remains, in a dull rivulet, ſix feet over, at the back of Vauxhall. The water is of a chocolate, or liver colour, as all water muſt, which paſſes through a peaty ſoil; ſo that the place might, with as much propriety, bear the name of *Liver*pool, as *Black*pool.

This abode of health, and ſcene of amuſement, lies on the weſtern borders of Lancaſhire, is part of the extenſive pariſh of Biſpham, and is four miles ſouth of the church. *Fleetwood Bold Heſketh*, Eſq. is lord of the manor, has a ſummer retreat five miles up the coaſt, called Roſſall Hall. Lancaſter lies twenty-five miles north; Garſtang twelve north-eaſt, and Poulton five. This laſt ſtands upon the Wire, and was once a port of ſome eminence, but is now a ſmall town.

on

on the decline, conſiſting of ſeven ſleepy ſtreets. Kirkham lies ten miles from Blackpool, and Preſton twenty, both to the eaſt.

The ſea coaſt at Blackpool, forms a ſtraight line for many miles. The bank, or cliff, which is clay, riſes various heights, from three feet to ſixty above high water mark. Although about fifty houſes grace the ſea bank, it does not merit the name of a village, becauſe they are ſcattered to the extent of a mile. About ſix of theſe make a figure, front the ſea, with an aſpect exactly weſt, and are appropriated for the reception of company; the others are the dwellings of the inhabitants, which chiefly form the back ground. In ſome of theſe are lodged the inferior claſs, whoſe ſole motive for viſiting this airy region, is health. This expanded hamlet, viewed from the ſea, a view ſeldom taken by the viſitant, muſt have a pleaſing effect. From the ſhore the

ground gradually riſes, which becomes a ſcreen from the keen eaſt.

I think there is neither hedge or tree in the whole neighbourhood. This want may ariſe from two cauſes, wind and idleneſs. Moderate winds purify the air, and are favourable to vegetation, but the boiſterous tend to prevent it. If we obſerve a common foreſt tree, we ſhall find its growth more rapid in a calm, than in a windy ſummer; rocked with violence, inſtead of *acquiring* bulk, it can ſcarcely preſerve its own. But perhaps the chief want of timber is owing to idleneſs. Their fathers did not plant, neither will they. A bank and a ditch, their common boundary, are eaſier made without a hedge than with one. They will ſooner be deprived of the ornament of trees, be without their profit, and without their uſe, as a ſhade from the ſun and the wind, than be at the trouble to rear them.

A naked

A naked country, though fertile, yields but a barren aſpect. The man who has an opportunity of planting, and will not, is neither a friend to his country nor himſelf.

The land in Lancaſhire is good, the views delightful, and abound with gentlemen's ſeats. While at Blackpool I frequently viſited the adjacent farmers for intelligence, and found the people extremely civil, and very communicative. Upon repeated enquiries into the value of land, I was informed it let from two to three guineas per acre. Amazed at this enormous ſum, though I ſaw the air of neatneſs and plenty, I aſked if they expected to *live?* "They hoped they ſhould be able to pay their rent." Impoſſible! Do you mean the ſtatute acre, ſaid I, for I know no other? "We mean the acre of full meaſure." Then pray what quantity is contained in the piece on which we ſtand? "Almoſt

an acre." Here the wonder ceaſed; the field was more than two.

The firſt ſtep towards enhancing the value of landed property, is *good roads*. Our roads have, in no period, improved ſo much as in the reigns of George the Second and Third; and there are none in which land has advanced with equal rapidity. If roads are bad, the farmer can neither bring improvement, nor carry off the produce. The good open his markets, and the bad ſhut them up. It is alſo the firſt ſtep towards civilization. A connexion with our ſpecies tends to humanize, to ſoften, and promote friendſhip. It introduces knowledge, for we are better informed of tranſactions a hundred miles off, than our anceſtors were ten. In a commercial view, the advantages are immenſe.

The

The approach to Blackpool is through good roads, which are ſafe and eaſy for the traveller; but they are attended with the ſame defect as are half the great roads in the kingdom, *want of mile ſtones.* Theſe are a cheap, and acceptable amuſement; and nothing ſhould be denied the traveller which tends to alleviate the fatigue of his journey. Every man wiſhes to know where he is; mile-ſtones will tell him. He conſiders them a ſucceſſion of intelligent companions, which never ſwerve from truth. They aſcertain the exact portion of his paſt and future labour. They prevent impoſition; *man* is juſt as apt to trick *man* out of a good ſhilling, as into a bad one; opportunity is all that is requiſite for both. Mile-ſtones tend to cure half this evil. I am told the diſtance between Preſton and Blackpool is only eighteen miles, but the traveller pays for twenty; conſequently, every time a poſt-chaiſe moves between the two places *ſome-body* is unjuſtly

juſtly ouſted out of two ſhillings, and all the return is, a ſmile and a bow from the landlord as he pockets the money, while the driver beſtows an able-bodied laſh upon the innocent horſes, at ſtarting, with a view to pocket more. Perhaps the reaſon why mile-ſtones ſo little abound is, not altogether the expence, but becauſe they are ſoon defaced, and rendered uſeleſs. I think, on moſt of our turnpike roads, there are either none, or they are hid in hedges, banks, or ſo far deſtroyed by the rude inhabitant, as to deny information. However modern their conſtruction, they quickly aſſume the antique. One would think they contained an attractive power, for every ſtone which ſhould inform the inquiſitive traveller, invites one from the miſchievous hand. Threatenings, rewards, and puniſhments, ſeldom avail; human nature will be human nature in ſpite of reſiſtance. But as it is better to ſecure the houſe from being robbed, than puniſh the robber,

robber, permit me, as a remedy, to recommend to the ſurveyor, a little invention which I introduced when treaſurer of the Alceſter road: It is no more than a plate of caſt iron, perhaps half an inch thick, ſixteen inches long, and eleven broad, with the letters raiſed, to ſhew the name of the town, and its diſtance; the ground black, and the letters white. The plate is laid into a block of wood, or ſtone, according to the produce of the country, and plugged faſt, with holes left for that purpoſe. This ſimple and cheap invention will prevent an evil, which the laws are unable to cure; will protect public benefit, which prudence cannot protect; it will ſtand the efforts of time, and the vengeance of the ſchool-boy, though pelted by the year. The foundries at Birmingham produce them to any direction. If a man travels through neceſſity, we ought to ſoften his hardſhip; if for pleaſure,

to heighten it. In doubtful turnings, the guide-poſt alſo ſhould never be omitted.

As the land at Blackpool gradually riſes from the ſhore, the eaſtern views are confined; the principal object is the ſea, which is ever under the eye; its infinite diverſity from the weather, its own flux and reflux, with the veſſels upon its ſurface, which are generally from one to ſix, afford a continual ſource of amuſement. To the north are ſeen, projecting into the water, at the diſtance of forty miles, the fells of Weſtmoreland, the craigs of Lancaſhire, and the hills of Cumberland. To the ſouth, perhaps at the diſtance of fifty, and projecting to a much greater extent, are ſeen the mountains of North Wales. They appear in ſolemn majeſty; and,

as if diſdaining the low ſituation of the ſea, riſe to the clouds. This beautiful range comprehends a north view of the counties of Cheſter, Flint, Denbigh, Carnarvan, and the Iſle of Angleſea. The Iſle of Man, nearly in front, is ſeen in ſome particular ſituations, but from the convexity of the globe, it affords a diminutive view. The likelieſt time to diſcover the iſland is, when the ſun has juſt ſet behind it; but even then we ſee it indiſtinctly; the ſmall tops of only two or three hills, which barely break the line of the horizon, afford but little ſatisfaction to the beholder.

Perhaps the efficacy of ſea water may be nearly the ſame at one watering place as another, but not the *air*. Different aſpects, ſituations, and ſoils, produce different kinds of air, more or leſs

beneficial

beneficial to the ſyſtem. There is at Blackpool no unfriendly ſoil to pollute it. The land is elevated, without any material hill. It has the advantage of ſea breezes, juſt in proportion as weſterly winds are more frequent than any other; and as there are no ſwamps in its neighbourhood, the air is probably as pure as air can be.

The inhabitants are remarkable for longevity, which proves the air is ſalubrious. A perſon told me, he had occupied his preſent abode more than ſeventy years; another, that "Death was a ſtranger at Blackpool."—During my writing this, there are, in one houſe, only three reſidents, and their ages are, ſixty-ſix, ſeventy-ſix, and eighty-ſix.—While a poor man lay expiring upon his bed, attended by his ſympathizing friends, one of them, a woman, exclaimed; "Poor John! I knew him a clever young fellow four-ſcore years ago."

It may ſeem a vain attempt to deſcribe, in a few lines, that vaſt element, the ſea, which comprehends more than half the globe, and which, at ſome times, wears an aſpect ſupremely beautiful, and at others, terribly grand. The hiſtory of man, and his unbounded connexions, ariſe from this fluid. At the top flow intelligence and commerce; at the bottom lie immenſe riches. Here the merchant finds wealth; the mariner, a grave.

The ſea, at Blackpool, retreats nearly half a mile at low water, leaving a bed of moſt beautiful and ſolid ſand, perfectly adapted for a gentleman to ſport an equipage. This extenſive ride continues near twenty miles. Here the gentry, of both ſexes, diſplay their horſemanſhip; and thoſe who command neither carriage nor horſe, find an equal pleaſure in uſing their feet.

This

This fine bed of ſand is new moulded every tide, but always left the ſame.

Sea weeds and ſhells, thoſe curious productions of nature, and pleaſing objects of attention, are not plentiful. The water is more barren than the land; it produces but few fiſh, and the tables, as well as the cabinets, are ill ſupplied from the ſea. The ſcarcity of fiſh, however, is remedied by the *Lon*, the *Wire*, and the *Ribble*, all in its vicinity. A marine diet is peculiarly acceptable to an in-land viſitant, who reſides where the article of fiſh is ſcanty and dear.—Sea excurſions are but little known, and fiſhing is not one of the pleaſures of Blackpool. From the flatneſs of the ground no veſſel can approach the ſhore; nay, we cannot enter the ſmalleſt boat without wading. The tide riſes about twelve feet; the ſpring tide about ſixteen.

There are no rocks to protect the land, or repel the wave. The ſea makes ſlow, but certain encroachments. I was ſurpriſed to find a road upon the ſummit of the cliff, near Blackpool, with a declivity on one ſide ſixty feet deep, and a mound on the other, to preſerve the incloſure, ſo extremely narrow as ſcarcely to admit one foot paſſenger with ſafety. But my ſurpriſe encreaſed when I beheld a waggon paſs this dangerous road. There could not, in ſome places, be ſix inches between the wheel and deſtruction. Upon enquiry, I was told, "it was the road from Black-"pool to Biſpham; that there was no other; "and that when the perſon, who occupies the "land, firſt entered, about fifty years ago, he "left as much ſpace when mounding his bank, "as would allow for four roads, ſuppoſing that "ſufficient to laſt his time; but that his four "roads were, long ago, waſhed away, and he "was obliged to allow as much ſpace as would

" make two more;" the laſt of theſe I ſaw. My intelligent informer pointed to a ſtone in the ſea, at leaſt half a mile from the ſhore, but as I did not viſit it, I cannot aſcertain its dimenſions, my curious reader will pardon me if I err, when I ſay, it may be eight feet high, and forty in circumference. He obſerved, " that according to " a tradition, which was allowed by the whole " country, a public houſe, ſome ages back, " ſtood by that ſtone, upon land as firm and high " as that on which we were, and that iron hooks " had been fixed in the ſtone, to which travellers " hung their horſes, while they drank their penny " pots, from whence the ſtone acquired, and " ſtill bears, the name of *penny-ſtone*. That the " hooks had long been gone, and he ſeemed to " lament, that the ſpot, which once produced " famous ale, abounded with nothing but water; " that a man then *preſerved* his life, where he " might now loſe it; and, that he might

" have

" have bought that ale at a penny, for which he " muſt now give three halfpence." But he forgot that he may now earn three halfpence with the ſame eaſe he might then a penny, for the difference does not conſiſt in ale being dearer, but money cheaper.—Covered with ſea weeds, inſtead of hooks, the ſtone now appears a venerable antique, and, viewed in ſome directions, fancy might eaſily convert it into a ſea monſter, with a ſavage head. The tide riſes much higher than the ſtone. There are ſeveral others, but none ſo large.

The bed of the ſea, at low water, is the place of amuſement. Here the gay make a figure, the decrepid ſeek for health, and the netters for ſhrimps; the carters gather ſtones to make their roads and their walls, and the curious gather ſhells; the builders ſeek for pebbles to burn into lime, and the healthy ſeek pleaſure.—Thus

various deſcriptions of men lay a tax upon the ſea; nay, the very cattle ſnuff up the ſea breeze, till driven back by the tide.

The mind recoils at the rehearſal of human woe; the errors of a man are loſt in his ſufferings; the *enemy* vaniſhes in diſtreſs. We regret the fall of ancient and honourable families, ſigh over their remains, and moiſten their duſt with a tear.

The moſt ſoutherly houſe in this extenſive, but ſcattered range, at Blackpool, bears the name of *Vauxhall*, and was once, perhaps forty years ago, the only houſe of public reſort, but is now in ruins, yet occupied by a private perſon. It belonged to the *Tildeſleys*, an ancient and opulent family

family in this county, but, who now, like the houſe, are gone to decay.

During the long and acrimonious conteſt between the Catholics and the Proteſtants, this houſe, under the name of a hunting-ſeat, was a private retreat for recuſants. Divine worſhip was performed by the prieſts in the principal room, then a chapel, but now a cheeſe-chamber.

When the Pretender in one thouſand ſeven hundred and fifteen determined to make a deſcent upon this kingdom, to recover the crown, it was reſolved between him and his Lancaſtrian friends, that he ſhould land among them, and be ſecreted till matters were ripe for a general inſurrection. Sir Thomas Tildeſley, the proprietor, fitted up this houſe for his reception, and one more proper could ſcarcely be choſen. However appearances may be altered, by modern improvement, it ſtood

then at the extremity of wild and deſolate lands, where a ſtranger would hardly think of venturing; and, within a very few yards of a dreary ſea, which no veſſel ever approached. Though it contained four or five rooms on a floor, it had no pretenſions to grandeur, therefore could not excite ſuſpicion. It was ſurrounded by a lofty wall, ſeemingly as a ſcreen againſt the winds, but really to convert the place into a fortification. The ſea was a guard on the weſt; the pool, from whence the place derived its name, ſecured the eaſt; the ſmall rivulet of peaty water, which communicates with the ſea, then a ſwamp, guarded the ſouth, and rendered this little retreat only acceſſible on the north. It alſo abounded with ſecret receſſes, communications, and hiding places within, to guard it againſt a ſurpriſe.

Sir Thomas, I was given to underſtand, was a *faithful loyaliſt*; ſtruck with the word, I aſked, if

if to the Hanoverian family? "No, the Stuart." The gentlemen ſeem yet to retain a warm affection for the memory of that unfortunate houſe. Political ſentiments oftener *wear out* than change. We cannot contemplate, without ſorrow, the hiſtory of thoſe unhappy adherents to the houſe of Stuart, who ventured their reputations, their fortunes, and their lives, loſt all, and were pronounced *rebels*.—The beſt title to a crown, is the choice of the people; the next is, an hereditary claim. The houſe of Stuart poſſeſſed the latter, but not the former. If the crown was wholly hereditary, it would follow of courſe, that the holder muſt poſſeſs arbitary power, otherwiſe, it carries a glaring contradiction. As far as the crown is elective, every ſubject has a right to elect; if he has a right to elect, he has a right to his own ſentiments; conſequently, though a man has no right to involve his country in blood, yet, of all the crimes, cognizable by law, that

of rebellion pleads the ſtrongeſt for mercy, becauſe it ariſes from principle. The common word *rebel*, which has certainly been fixed upon many a worthy character, is a word not well underſtood, having never been explained. Some ſay, it means he who takes an oppoſite ſide to one's ſelf. Others, one who oppoſes the king; even the great *Johnſon*, who wrote a dictionary nearly as big as himſelf, at leaſt, as big among books as he among men, leaves us in the dark, by telling us, "he is one who oppoſes lawful authority." But this can only mean an authority that makes laws, which may not always be lawful, and may as often be wrong as right. But the preciſe meaning of the word is, THE LOSER. A battle won, covers every defect, both in the man, and his title; but to loſe one, creates the villain, and demands the axe. Robert Duke of Normandy was the *rebel*, though ſubdued by his younger brothers, William the

Second,

Second, and Henry the Firſt. When King Stephen loſt the battle of Lincoln, he and his confederates were *rebels*; but when he afterwards gained the aſcendant over *Maud*, and her general, the *Earl of Glouceſter*, the Empreſs's party bore the badge of *rebellion*. While the two roſes were, for thirty years, weighing in the balance, each end of the beam alternately moved up and down; the down was the *rebel*. Had Richard the Third been victorious againſt Henry the Seventh, he would have marked him, and his *rebellious* followers, with bloody characters, but as the reverſe happened, the ſtigmatizing mark of *rebel* was impoſed upon Richard, and his. Which ever party ſhould have had the misfortune to be defeated, in the conteſt between Stuart and Brunſwick, muſt have been pronounced *the rebel*. A heretic in religion, and a rebel in politics, only mean *the weaker ſide*.

The

The difference between a rebel and one who is not, conſiſts in *opinion*, and both their opinions may originate from education, which loudly pleads for the loſer. Whenever I read of a king generouſly pardoning a rebel, I revere his character; he purſued the only way to win an enemy.

The unfortunate gentlemen of the northern counties, who ſtaked their *all* upon the houſe of Stuart, againſt that of Brunſwick, could have had no motive but principle. They ſtood a great chance of being loſers, but a ſmall one of gaining. The riſk of their own property was immediate, but the proſpect of reward, even if fortunate, was diſtant and precarious. They could not forget the treatment of Charles the Second, when he arrived at power, to the friends of his houſe, who had loſt every thing of value in his cauſe. He made a point of neglecting them. A ſtriking inſtance of this ungrateful

return

return was ſeverely felt by the Stanleys. Lord Derby was one of his moſt faithful adherents, ruined his family, and loſt his fortune, and his head, in the royal cauſe. Parliament, after the reſtoration, moved with compaſſion for the ſufferings of that ancient houſe, paſſed an act in their favour, which Charles abſolutely refuſed to ratify; perhaps from an apprehenſion of their power. What motive then but conſcious rectitude could draw friends to an intereſt, whoſe return for favours was ingratitude?

If my reflections have carried me too far from Blackpool, the importance of the ſubject muſt be my excuſe——I leave it with regret.

During the time of which I have been writing there could not be another building in Blackpool, that

that would bear the name of a *houſe*. This royal dormitory, therefore, muſt have ſtood, *the little hall among huts*. Nor were the huts numerous, for many are modern, and ſeem to tell the obſerver, that the place rapidly improves. None of the ſuperior houſes, for the reception of company, ſeem to be more than ſeven years old. A gentleman, who had regularly viſited this abode of pleaſure twenty-ſeven years, aſſured me, when he firſt knew the place, that little white cottage at the lane end, now the news houſe, was the only one of public reſort; and the ſpot, now the coffee-room, was a blackſmith's ſhop; it appears, the people who then frequented Blackpool, were chiefly of the lower claſs. The company, and the accommodations, will always bear a proportion to each other. Even in its preſent improved ſtate, Blackpool is yet in its infancy; but the roads, the accommodations, the civility, the eaſy price, and, above all, the fair

proſpect of health, will draw company. This place, which is too young to be noticed at a diſtance, by the gay, or the ſickly world, derives its chief ſupport from Lancaſhire, and Manchester contributes the largeſt ſhare. Thus circumſtanced, and viſited by the lively, it muſt be delightful in the ſummer, but perhaps, in the ſame proportion, bleak and ſolitary in the winter. When I ſaw it, in Auguſt, one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty-eight, the company were about four hundred; I was there again in October, when few people were ſeen except its ſolitary inhabitants, and few ſounds heard, except from the winds and the ſea. Society fled, the ſtranger becomes a ſilent ſpectator of perpetual quarrels between theſe two ſurly neighbours.

A ſpot,

A ſpot, like Blackpool, which is only *riſing* into exiſtence, cannot be expected to furniſh thoſe conveniencies which are generally found among long eſtabliſhed aſſemblages of men. Many things are wanting to complete a community, and *all* cannot be acquired at once. It is common, firſt to ſerve ourſelves, and then—— the Lord. There is here no place of public worſhip. Biſpham, the pariſh church, is the neareſt; neither could I hear of divine ſervice being performed in any of the rooms, nor ſee one methodiſt preacher rearing againſt a wall.

He who viſits a place of entertainment, expects to find pleaſure. It is the intereſt of the inhabitants to multiply *amuſements*, that when one

ſatiates, another may be at hand. The ſpirit of diverſion is kept up by variety, and different purſuits, invite different tempers. I have already remarked, that one of the leading amuſements at Blackpool, is to ride or walk upon the ſands. Another is, to figure on the parade. This is a pretty graſs-walk on the verge of the ſea bank, divided from the road with white rails. It is perhaps ſix yards wide, and two hundred long, with an alcove on *one* end only, but at the other a vile pit. This parade is capable, by art improving nature, of being made one of the moſt beautiful walks in the iſland. It might eaſily be extended a mile, in a ſtraight line, and at no great expence, with an alcove at *each* end. If the connoiſſeur tells us, "there is no beauty in ſtraight lines," I reply, nature has given this a gentle ſweep, or fall in the centre, which obviates the remark, and would confer a double beauty. Only two boarding houſes lie contiguous, in its preſent

preſent confined ſtate, but if extended, it would comprehend others; beſides, the walk is often crowded, even in this early ſtage, which pleads the neceſſity of an augmentation. Side-benches, at certain diſtances, with ends and backs, to ſcreen off the wind, and covers to prevent the rain, would be ſuitable conveniencies.

A perpetual aſſemblage of company, when the weather permits, may be ſeen upon this little elegant walk; here is a full diſplay of beauty, and of faſhion. Here the eye, faithful to its truſt, conveys intelligence from the heart of one ſex to that of the other; gentle tumults riſe in the breaſt, intercourſe opens in tender language; the ſofter paſſions are called into action; Hymen approaches, kindles his torch, and cements that union which continues for life. Here are ſaid, formal and civil, as well as amorous things. Here friendſhip extends to the lip, and dies in a breath;

a breath; vacancies of ſpeech are filled up by the weather, and inſignificant obſervations prevent confuſion from ſilence. Here the frailty of one nymph is whiſpered by another, equally frail; but the falſe ſtep of one had the good fortune to be hid in darkneſs, while the other was attended with the crying ſin of falling under public view. Here may be ſeen folly, fluſhed with money and ſhoe-ſtrings; keen envy ſparkle in the eye at the diſplay of a new bonnet; the heireſs of eighteen trimmed with black, and a hundred thouſand pounds plentifully ſquander her looks of diſdain; the ſhadow of a man under the appellation of *Beau*, echo the ſentences of others, but utter none of his own; the humble miſer, who feeds upon eighteen-pence a day, and commands thirty thouſand pounds, whoſe apparel would not command one. Here the ſtale *belle*, who out-ſtood her market, offers her fading charms upon eaſy terms; and here may be ſeen the ſilent ſtanger,

whom nobody owns, making his ſhrewd remarks.

The ſame evil ſpirit which haunts other watering-places, haunts this; that of being acquainted with none but thoſe under the ſame roof; even the miſer, ſtationed by frugality at an inferior houſe, dares not look up to his own daughter at *Bailey*'s, while the pride of that houſe will ſcarcely permit her to follow *him* with a glance. The innkeepers live friendly, and exchange favours; civility abounds among the company at every public houſe, but is circumſcribed by the walls, and confined a priſoner. If a ſtranger arrives at *Forſhaw*'s, his friendſhip with that houſe depends upon a vacant bed; ſhould he ſucceed, he forfeits all title to that of *Hull*'s. Every man carries about him a mixture of good and ill-nature, for occaſional uſe, but here they are ſeparated; he carries his good-nature within the building, and

the

the other without. I had long conſidered the human ſpecies as one vaſt family, and though ſubordination was neceſſary, yet, a few thouſands made but little difference in the degrees of men; that even the pauper, who behaved with propriety, was entitled to civility; that when people's fortunes and manners were nearly equal, they might fairly claſs together. Poſſeſſed with theſe uncultivated notions, I was unwilling to follow an abſurd cuſtom ſo injurious to ſociety, therefore joined various companies, in the trifling chat of the day, while promiſcuouſly ſeated in the alcove, but found I was rather repelled than drawn, *I was not of their houſe.* Neceſſity then obliged me to follow the narrow faſhion of the place, and confine myſelf to thoſe of my own abode, where I found the treatment I wiſhed. I confeſs this is not one of the *amuſements* of Blackpool, though introduced under that head. Pride is uſually founded upon the poſſeſſion of a ſuppoſed excel-

lence, but has always a flimſy baſis. Should a perſon abound with landed, or nabob property, he can only conſider himſelf a tenant at will, whoſe inheritance is ſhort and uncertain, conſequently he is not far from a level with the meaneſt. Should he boaſt *a long line of anceſtry*, then more ſcoundrels may be found in *his* family, than in *his* who has no pedigree. If *beauty* is the capital, it is a flower which cannot be preſerved from fading. If the poſſeſſion is that of *good ſenſe*, it will teach the owner another leſſon; if a *title*, his pride is founded only upon the breath of his prince, which every man may ratify, or refuſe at pleaſure, for this is a tribute which even a peer cannot demand. Pride of every ſort, beyond that which preſerves from meanneſs, appears ill in every eye except the owner's. But for that capricious pride, of which I have been ſpeaking, I can find neither foundation nor name. Its likeneſs does not exiſt in the air, the earth, or the

water, for every animal in the creation ſeeks, aſſociates with, and loves its own ſpecies.—— Cards and backgammon are a reſource when the weather is unfavourable. There are bowling-greens, but they are diminutive; conveniencies for ſailing as much as a flat ſhore will allow; alſo butts, for bow-ſhooting; and many of the company amuſe themſelves with *fine ale at number three*. Beauty diſplays itſelf in the dance, and the place is dignified with a theatre, if *that* will bear the name, which, during nine months in the year is only the threſhing-floor of a barn; but even this homely ſtile is vaſtly ſuperior to that of the ancients; for the firſt comedy ever performed was by *Suſſarian* and *Dolan*, five hundred and ſixty-two years before the chriſtian æra, upon a ſcaffold in the open air; and the firſt tragedy, by *Theſpis*, at Athens, in a waggon. I ſaw the company arrive at Blackpool, and thought the queens of the ſtage looked as if their dignity was

a little hurt, at being caught in a *cart*; however, they acted for once without assuming a borrowed character. Rows of benches are placed one behind another, and honoured with the names of *pit* and *gallery*, the first, two shillings, the other one. The house is said to hold six pounds; it was half filled. The amusements with which Blackpool *is unfurnished*, and which might be easily supplied, are tennis, shuttlecock, cricket, shuffle-board, and billiards.

Youth as naturally seeks for pleasure, as age for retirement; one is sick with being in the busy world, the other with being out. Every second sunday, the lads and the lasses from the adjacent country, assemble at the lane end, and form a kind of wake, or fair. Here the young men practice their little diversions; the old

women

women wiſh to diſpoſe of their fruit, and the young, of their hearts.

Truth, like every ſpecies of merchandize, is more or leſs valuable, according to its ſcarcity. That which we can command at pleaſure, we value at a low rate; even *health*, that beſt of property, is reckoned at naught till loſt.

As the ladies are often treated with falſhood by our ſex, they will, at leaſt, pardon the man who ſpeaks truth; who brings them a rarity they ſeldom receive. We have long been taught to believe the words "*Lancaſhire Witches*, ariſe "from the bewitching charms of the ladies, "which ſurpaſs thoſe of other counties; that it "would be dangerous for a young man to carry

" his heart into Lancaſhire, and ſcarcely poſſible " to carry it *through* without a wound." Fifty years elapſed before I could examine the truth of theſe remarks; but having made the reſearch with great attention, I can aſſure the affrighted adventurer to the Blackpool ſhore, that the Lancaſhire ladies are not that miſchievous race of beings they are repreſented. He may ſafely carry his heart *in* and *through* the county, and find the witches perfectly harmleſs. He will be in no more danger than *Don Quixote* with the lovely *Altiſidora*. Perhaps he would find a more hazardous paſſage through the little town of Aſhbourn in the Peak, than the whole county of Lancaſter. Though beauties, at a curſory view, may ſeem to abound, as in other places, yet the careful obſerver, upon a fair examination, will think with me, They are a " *leetle*" below mediocrity.

The

The man who has money of his own has a right to ſpend it, otherwiſe he cannot boaſt the freedom of an Engliſhman. If he ſpends it upon the ſea, he may expect a return; this is made in pleaſure, or in health; if the firſt, by keeping up his own good humour, he may extract that of others, which is an ample repayment; if the ſecond, the ſea will repay him three ways, in air, drinking the water, and *bathing*. Some uſe all three, but all uſe the firſt.

The time of bathing is generally at the flood; for the company being driven from the ſands, the place is more private; there is a ſhorter ſpace to travel, becauſe the ſea is brought near the bank; they alſo avoid the *ſting-fiſh*, a beautiful white fiſh, about one inch and a half broad, and four long, which lurks in the ſand at low water, and is apt to dart its ſting in the foot that treads

treads upon it. A bell rings at the time of bathing, as a ſignal for the ladies. Some uſe machines drawn by one horſe, a few travel from their apartments in their water dreſs, but the majority clothe in the boxes, which ſtand on the beach for their uſe. If a gentleman is ſeen upon the parade he forfeits a bottle of wine. When the ladies retire, the bell rings for the gentlemen, who act a ſecond part in the ſame ſcene.

Health is among the great variety of marine productions, and happy is the man who finds it. Some ſeek in vain, others too ſhort a time, and a third claſs deſtroy at the table what they gain from the ſea. The ſame miſconduct which brings on a complaint will defeat the effects of a remedy. A ſhattered conſtitution, like a decayed building, admits of no cure; it can only be

be patched. He who is poſſeſſed of an excellent habit, need ſeek nothing at Blackpool but amuſement; but the afflicted muſt uſe caution; this may long preſerve the tenement from falling.

To attempt a chymical analyſis of ſea water, and its phyſical operations on the body, might be thought a treſpaſs upon the province of profeſſional men, and, to deſcribe its cures, would far exceed my limits; I ſhall, therefore, only relate a ſmall number which fell within my own knowledge, without entering into a particular detail of thoſe people who were *carried* to Blackpool, and *walked* back; or of thoſe who brought their complaints and their crutches, and left both.

I ſtopped a man upon the ſands with a leathern apron, whoſe whole apparel did not ſeem worth a ſhilling; he was going with a mug for ſalt water.

Upon

Upon my enquiries, he gave me to underſtand, "He was a ſhoemaker from Lancaſter, and was "drawing towards ſeventy; that at forty-five "his love for the fair ſex got the better of his "prudence, and he married a girl of eighteen. "She ſoon brought him ſix children, which had "kept him poor to that moment; that he had "had a complication of diſorders, the moſt "alarming of which was that of being totally "blind; that he had reſided at Blackpool, in "a petty lodging, about ſix weeks, during which "he drank ſea water, waſhed his eyes, and ſome-"times bathed; that his complaints were re-"moved, and his ſight ſo far recovered, as to "diſtinguiſh an object at two miles diſtance." I congratulated his riſing happineſs, and obſerved, the pariſh perhaps aſſiſted him in this expenſive undertaking. His pride inſtantly took the alarm, and he replied with ſome emotion, "he had never coſt any man a penny." I

farther

farther expreſſed my ſatisfaction, and we parted in amity.

A gentleman of Mancheſter, in advanced life, was afflicted, in March, eighty-eight, with a paralytic affection, which nearly deprived him of the uſe of his left ſide, except, that it did not much affect his intellects. His phyſician ordered him to Bath, from whence he returned without receiving benefit. He then ſent him to Blackpool, where he arrived during my ſtay, and was carried *in* and *out* of the water. When about three days had elapſed, I aſked him if he found any alteration? He replied, "Much; for the violent pains in his joints had left him, he had recovered his ſleep, and in ſome degree, his former retention of urine. What farther benefit he received, my ſhort ſtay prevented me from knowing. To ſuch an object, temporary relief is all we can expect; a cure is

not

not in nature. Could a remedy be found to preſerve us from the grave, the next generation would riſe againſt this, for keeping them out of their rights. The world is a freehold, held only in tenancy by the *preſent* inhabitants, but is entailed upon the future.

An emaciated figure at our table, from the ſame place, that muſt excite compaſſion from the feeling mind, told me, "that though but thirty-"two, he had retired upon an eaſy fortune; but "having been engaged in the liquor trade, the "temptation was too ſtrong for reſiſtance, and "the reſult was a dropſy, but that he was much "better by reſiding five weeks at Blackpool." What uſe he made of the ſea, except to breathe its air, I know not, for I generally found him, even in warm weather, inactive by the fire, and believe he was more converſant with *diſtilled* than *ſea* water.

A youth

A youth of the above place, following the occupation of a ſilverſmith, found his ſight, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty-ſix, by attention to minute objects, gradually decay, which totally rendered him unfit for buſineſs; but a viſit to Blackpool in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty-ſeven, perfectly recovered him, ſo as to be enabled to follow his employment without a relapſe. It appears from theſe inſtances, that the ſea is the reſtorer, and the guardian of health; that the people of Manchester, in particular, find here a grave for their complaints, and their money.

Ricketty and puny children find benefit from this friendly element. Watered with its influence, the dwindling plant is taught to grow. Three drooping infants fell under my eye, who, as their parents aſſured me, had found relief.

An old inhabitant remarked, "A viſit to "Blackpool commonly reſtored health, if health "was reſtorable."

I need not inform the reader, that food is the ſupport of exiſtence; the fatigue of one day's labour; a craving ſtomach; the long breathing of land, or ſea air; an ill-furniſhed pocket, or table, will convince him, in ſtronger terms than all the rhetoric of an author. But to many people who are able to taſte the pleaſures of Blackpool, it becomes an inveterate foe, the harbinger of diſorder, and the enemy of life. It deſtroys while it ſeems to preſerve. Such a one may be ſaid, to eat his way to deſtruction, to devour up himſelf. His delight is in ſmoak, but ſuch only as ariſes from a well-ſpread table; this is incenſe of the firſt flavour; and though

his

his life be full of changes, they chiefly conſiſt in changing his plate. The temptation to feaſting overpowers the reſolution. He forgets that *diſeaſe* lurks in an excellent diſh; and that an enemy in ambuſh is the moſt dangerous of enemies.

The tables at Blackpool are amply ſupplied; if I ſay, too well for the price, I may pleaſe the innkeepers, but not their gueſts; however, to enhance that price might be detrimental to both. Fiſh, as obſerved, is an article expected upon the ſea coaſt, it is the only one defective, but is ſupplied from the neighbourhood. Shrimps are plentiful. Five or ſix people make it their buſineſs to catch them at low water, and produce ſeveral gallons a day, which ſatisfies all but the catchers. They excel in cooking; nor is it ſurprizing, for forty pounds and her maintenance are given to a cook for the ſeaſon only. Though ſalt water is brought in

plenty to their very doors, yet this is not the caſe with freſh. The place yields only one ſpring for family uſe, and the water is carried, by ſome, half a mile, but is well worth carrying, for I thought it the moſt pleaſant I ever taſted.

The prices for boarding are various. The higheſt is three ſhillings and four-pence a day, excluſive of liquors; dinner and ſupper a ſhilling each, and eight-pence for breakfaſt and tea. Another is half a crown for eating, the party finding his tea, coffee, ſugar, and liquors. A third is eighteen-pence; amongſt this claſs are very decent people, who wiſh retirement, and are unwilling to loſe thoſe advantages at night which they draw from the ſea in the day. There are alſo other boarding houſes, much inferior, ſuch as that occupied by my friend the ſhoe-maker, whoſe prices I did not examine; lodging is included. The money for each perſon's liquor

liquor is collected before the company rises from table, but the half crowns may remain during the visitant's own time, or till he quits the place. This mode of reckoning is preferable to that at Aberistwith, for there the account is omitted, in spite of solicitation, till both innkeeper and guest are puzzled; this neglect, however, does not appear to originate from a fraudulent design, becaufe I obferved, the man generally committed the errors againft himfelf.

Society without order, can no more be conducted than a kingdom without laws. Anarchy is productive of injuftice, injuftice gives birth to laws, and laws to decorum. The more thefe laws are adapted to the good of a people, the more that people profper. If they are wantonly made, they are not likely to be kept, but when

they ariſe from neceſſity, they ſhould never be violated with impunity. A boarding-houſe at Blackpool, though conſiſting of one hundred perſons, may be conſidered either as a private family, or a kingdom; the ſame maxims which conduct one, will the other. The viſitants are of two ſorts, thoſe who abound with health, and thoſe who want it. It would be kind in the firſt to compaſſionate the other. Of all the different ſpecies of charity known in the chriſtian world, that of miniſtering to diſtreſs ſtands firſt. Acts of kindneſs, by ſoothing the mind, carry their own reward. *Reſt* is as neceſſary to recruit the human frame, as food. If thoſe in health are obliged to court ſleep, how muſt the ſick attain it? But what excuſe can be made, if the healthful *wantonly* deprive the afflicted? Diſturbance reigns at midnight. In a large and hollow-ſounding houſe every noiſe operates with full effect, and pervades the whole. Sounds are

continually

continually rising during the night, "which "murder sleep," and repose, once lost, cannot soon be recovered.

It might, if approved by the voice of the majority, be enacted, in this infant commonwealth:

I. That every visitant, at his arrival, shall enter his name in a book, kept for that purpose at every inn, as at Buxton, and subscribe a shilling.

II. No person to take a place at table before dinner is served in, upon the forfeiture of a shilling, and then every one to be seated according to priority.

III. If any person is vociferous after twelve, so as to disturb the peace of the family, to incur the same penalty.

IV.

IV. The ſenior viſitant, as chief magiſtrate, to execute theſe orders, or depute another.

V. All the above accumulations to be appropriated towards improving the parade.

VI. When the parade is completed, the money to be applied towards erecting a chapel, or aſſiſting diſtreſſed objects, whoſe ſole motive for viſiting Blackpool, is health.

VII. The profits ariſing from the ſale of this work, which perhaps, may be ſix-pence each book, ſhall be applied as above, towards the parade, the chapel, or the poor and afflicted ſtranger.

Meſſrs. Bailey, Forſhaw, Hull, and Hudſon, to be requeſted to act in rotation, as annual ſtewards, receive the money collected, and appropriate it to the uſes intended.

Order is harmony, and is accompanied by happineſs; every man ſhould enjoy his own freedom, without enfringing that of another.—— Silence, at proper hours, would then reign in the family.—The indiſpoſed be favoured with reſt.—The beauties, the uſe, and the pleaſures of Blackpool increaſe.—The indigent bleſs the ſource of relief.—The viſitant regret the time of his departure, reflect upon his journey with pleaſure, and eagerly wiſh a return.

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